



The Ames Intelligencer

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Member of American Association for Local & State History

Spring 1992

Come One, Come All Preservation Fair

Saturday, May 16 — 9:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.

Ames Public Library Auditorium
Free Refreshments

In honor of National Historic Preservation Week, the Ames Heritage Association will host a preservation fair on May 16 from 9:30 - 2:30. This year's theme is "Preservation Brings History to Life!" In keeping with this theme Clair Keller, portraying George Washington, will open the preservation fair with "A Visit to Mt. Vernon with George Washington." This is an excellent opportunity to learn about life at Mt. Vernon in the days of Washington.

Following this, at 10:45, Will Page, will present an overview of the Ames Historical and Architectural Resources Survey. Page, a public historian with the Dunbar/Jones Partnership and principal investigator for the survey, will talk about Ames' heritage from the perspective of the survey. The City of Ames commissioned the recently-completed survey which is composed of two parts, (1) an intensive survey of the downtown business district, and (2) a reconnaissance survey of places within the Ames city limits as of 1943. At 1:00 Janet Klaas, information services librarian, Ames Public Library,

will talk about the Farwell T. Brown Photography Collection. Klaas has recently completed organizing and cataloging the collection donated to the library by Brown.

Displays will be available for browsing throughout the event. The displays offer an opportunity for the public to become

acquainted with various groups and individuals involved with local history projects. Membership brochures, newsletters, and other printed material will be available to attendees. The fair ends at 2:30 p.m. Citizens are invited to attend all or any part of the fair. No registration is necessary and there is no fee for attending. "Preservation Week is a time for us to bring history to life when we join together to



George Washington as portrayed by Clair W. Keller.

celebrate the unique heritage and culture of our hometowns," says Jack Walter, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Ames Heritage Association encourages you to attend the preservation fair to catch a glimpse of Ames' history and to learn about the organizations and projects happening locally which serve to preserve our history for future generations.

A FINAL REMINDER to those who have not paid their 1992 dues - send your check to **AHA, BOX 821, Ames, IA 50010** now to avoid being dropped from the membership. Those not up to date with dues will not receive the next newsletter.

Billy Sunday Biography

William Ashley (Billy) Sunday was born on his grandparents' farm just south of Ames on November 19, 1862. Martin and Mary Ann Cory settled there in 1852 on land now occupied by the Highway 30 and Duff Avenue interchange, and the old (Ames) water treatment plant. The Cory family cemetery is still located on that site, and includes eighteen burials.

Billy Sunday and his two brothers were orphaned when their father became an early Civil War casualty, and life for the family was a struggle despite Mary Jane Sunday's remarriage in 1864. The boys attended a one-room school just west of the farm where their teacher, C. G. McCarthy instilled a love of baseball. Mary Jane offered her sons love and nurturing. However, after her second marriage ended in divorce, and a third union to an itinerant carpenter provided little family support, the two younger boys, Billy and Ed, were placed in orphanages. Billy returned

to the Cory farm when he was fourteen, but differed with his grandfather to the extent that he chose to live on his own. He moved to Nevada where he became acquainted with Colonel John Scott, a leading citizen and the state's Lieutenant Governor. Sunday attended Nevada High School, also working as a janitor and doing chores for Colonel Scott, who provided him with room and board. He continued to play noteworthy baseball in Nevada, and in Marshalltown where he moved to take a job in a furniture shop. In Marshalltown he was discovered on the city team by Adrian Anson, captain of the Chicago baseball team then known as the White Stockings and today known as the Cubs. Billy rose to the major leagues in 1883 after trying out for the team. Sunday held the National League record for running bases in fourteen seconds. His record of ninety-six stolen bases in one season was exceeded only by Ty Cobb's mark of ninety-eight.

By 1891 he had begun to divide his time between baseball and the Chicago Y.M.C.A. The spirit of his mother's nurturing love and his religious training in the orphanage were reawakened and influenced Sunday to change his life. Turning down an offer of \$500 a month to play with Cincinnati's National League Club, Billy accepted an \$83 a month job with the Chicago Y.M.C.A. His reputation as a ball player provided natural appeal to the young men he worked with. He attended Northwestern University where the study of Psychology reinforced his love of people and contributed to his mastery of audiences. After three years with the Y.M.C.A., he went to work with J. Wilbur Chapman, well known Presbyterian evangelist. Billy Sunday's first platform appearance was in Gar-



Billy Sunday's preaching style included standing with a foot on the pulpit.

ner, Iowa, in 1896 where he first became aware that his direct, sincere manner of speaking "got through" to people. He was ordained into the mainline Presbyterian denomination of his day. He became known as the "Baseball Evangelist" and lived at a time when American society was in the mood for the idealism Sunday expounded. Sunday was supported and sought after by U.S. presidents and community leaders throughout the country. His trademarks were pointed, sometimes earthy and always quotable one-liners, and theatrical antics at the podium. He urged his audiences to become active in the church and he believed the church should be active in social issues. Though conservative by some standards, he advocated women's right to vote, labor unions and sex education. Many people disagreed with his theology, but they supported his down to earth style and his position on moral problems. Billy Sunday died on November 6, 1935 at the age of seventy-three, ending one of the most remarkable careers of the twentieth century. He is buried in Chicago.

(EDITORS NOTE: This biography is from a brochure published by the Ames Heritage Association. Text adapted by Kathy Svec from an article by Farwell T. Brown).



Billy Sunday, famed baseball player turned evangelist.

Ames' Historic Bandshell

Adapted by Sharon Wirth from an article by Farwell Brown.

The square city block along the east side of Duff Avenue between Fifth and Sixth Streets was earlier referred to as the City Park. Today it is known as Bandshell Park to most. A bandstand stood in the center of the park constructed of concrete blocks with a concrete floor, but no roof. Constructed around 1909, it probably replaced a wood structure dating from a still earlier time.

By 1934 the old bandstand was beginning to crumble and was entirely inadequate for the city band Ames had organized. Not only was it in poor shape physically, the bandstand was no longer large enough for the growing numbers of musicians in the Ames Municipal band. During the summer of 1934 there were thirty-five band members who practiced regularly. The City Council was asked to increase the band fund to \$2,600.

Under the leadership of M.C. Severson, the members of the Ames Band unanimously passed a resolution recommending to the City Council that a new facility be built. The facility should be a bandshell with a basement for band practice along with an adequate concert platform for the enjoyment of the people of Ames. The resolution was presented to the City Council on April 16, 1934.

In the days following, the Ames Woman's Club Chorus and Ames Labor Council submitted statements in support of the petition. Public support for the bandshell project gained momentum with the Ames Kiwanis Club, Ames Rotary Club, the Ames Park Board, the American Legion, the Ames Chamber of Commerce, and the Music Division of the Faculty Woman's Club all announcing their enthusiastic support.

On November 13, 1934, the City Council approved a contract with Grover Pratt of Iowa State University's Architecture Department to serve as the architect for the bandshell project along with Pratt's preliminary plans and specifications for its construction. The Ames Tribune of November 14, 1934, reported cost estimates for the bandshell con-

struction were between \$10,000 and \$12,000.

By mid-December plans were ready for final approval. A committee was appointed to arrange for the use of some public works volunteer labor in constructing the foundation for the bandshell. Low bid for the main contract was received from Fred Fisher, a local contractor, in the amount of \$22,880. J.R. Jones was given the contract for the cooper roof, including an exacting procedure that produced a long lasting cover.

It was soon obvious that the early cost estimates were significantly low. In the final report, the total cost of the Bandshell came to \$39,072. This cost difference resulted in some criticism of both the City Council and the architect. Architect Pratt was unhappy with the criticism and some months later accepted an architectural teaching position at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan.

The Bandshell, or Music Pavilion, as it was sometimes referred to was dedicated on the evening of June 13, 1935. The Eighth Annual Iowa Bandmasters Convention was hosted by the City with the dates set to coincide with the dedication. Mayor W.A. Allen presented the Bandshell to the City with 4,000 folks present. Grover Pratt, the architect, was commended for the successful acoustic qualities of the shell. The bandshell became a source of pride to most Ames folks, especially those enjoying the weekly band concerts and the growing numbers participating in the band.

After its completion in 1935 the Ames Bandshell was the scene of numerous band gatherings. Following participation at the Bandshell, Dr. A.A. Harding, Director of Bands at the University of Illinois remarked, "The Ames Bandshell, and all of the associated accommodations, including the rehearsal room, dressing rooms, library and office rooms, is the finest structure of its kind in the United States." The editor of a Sioux Falls, S. D. newspaper wrote, "On the return trip



The Ames Bandshell is shown here as it appeared in 1935.

of 5,000 miles through the United States and Canada, with the Sioux Falls High School Band, and having played concerts in many metropolitan cities, including the bandshell in New York City where the famous Goldman Band plays, I believe the Ames Bandshell is the finest one of its kind that I have seen."

The 1935 Bandshell dominates the city park known today as Bandshell Park. Still an important gathering place, Bandshell concert attendance was estimated at 7,000 last year. Free concerts by the Municipal Band are held each Thursday evening in June and July. Improvement of restroom facilities is currently under study with construction of a separate building for these facilities a possibility.

The Bandshell holds a significant place in Ames' history. Outdoor amphitheaters were a popular public facility nationwide in the 1930's. Examples of this include the Sylvan Theatre in Des Moines' Greenwood Park and the Hollywood Bowl in California. The Ames Bandshell is part of this movement. Construction during the depression when Ames' economy was a bright spot among many troubled areas in Iowa adds to its significance. The Bandshell calls attention to the long-time importance of music among Ames' cultural activities.



Shortly after completion in 1935.

Brown Given Award

Farwell Tilden Brown was recently given the 1992 Community Award by the Ames Broadcasting Corporation. The award was presented at the Ames Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting and banquet at C.Y. Stevens. Brown is well known throughout the community for his devotion to local history. He has written numerous articles, hosted television reports and other visual presentations, collected historical photos and other Ames memorabilia, and is currently working on a pictorial history of Ames. The 1992 winter issue of the *Intelligencer* includes a feature article about Brown's photography collection. The citizens of Ames owe much to Brown who for years has chronicled the City's history.

The Ames Chamber of Commerce presents the awards to acknowledge extraordinary accomplishments. Jamie Larson, president of ACI Mechanical Corporation, was presented with the Hollis H. Nordyke Small Business Person of the Year Award. Recipient of the Douglas A. Harms Entrepreneur of the Year was Bob Cummings, owner of Aunt Maude's and O'Malley and McGee's restaurants. Congratulations to all three recipients and thank you for your efforts.

Call For Membership Involvement

Members wishing to assist with the Association's projects in any way, large or small, should contact a member of the Board. Periodic workdays at the Bauge Home and Hoggatt School require both skilled and unskilled labor; hosting public events might take a cheerful smile and the donation of cookies; willingness to research topics for stories in the newsletter would gladly be put to use. A

knack for arranging displays would be welcomed. Board members are Kathy Svec, Don Faas, Cele Burnett, Bill LaGrange, Jack Adams, Elaine Bath, Lee Himan, Clair Keller, Bev Kudla, Coleen Nutty, Dean Stebbins, Rod Wilcox, and Sharon Wirth. Assistance is needed for the upcoming preservation fair and Cory Family Cemetery plaque dedication.

Annual Meeting Held

Approximately 65 people attended the Association's annual meeting on Jan. 20, 1992 at the Ames Public Library. An enjoyable program was presented by the Living History Farms Readers Theater group. The annual financial report indicated income in the amount of \$6,589.50 and expenses (including Bauge House restoration) in the amount of \$9,677.75

Bill LaGrange, for the nominating committee, reported the terms of the following directors were completed: Everett Ritland, Dwight Herold, Ann Watts, George McJimsey, and Jack Adams. The Association expresses its appreciation for the time and energy these individuals have given the organization. Class of 1995 directors elected include Jack Adams, Clair Keller, Coleen Nutty, and Rod Wilcox.

Recent Deaths

The Board of Directors expresses its condolences to the families of Everett Steensland and Hazel Childs. Everett Steensland, of rural Huxley, died March 3, 1992 of a stroke. Everett and his wife, Avis, donated the Bauge Log House to the Ames Heritage Association and the Story County Conservation Board. The log house was

moved from its original location north of Huxley to McFarland Park where restoration is underway.

Hazel Childs of Ames died March 3, 1992 of a heart ailment. Mrs. Childs was a charter member of the Ames Heritage Association. We extend our sympathies to the Steensland and Childs families.

Iowa Celebration

On April 10 and 11 Travel Genie, 620 W. Lincolnway, held their first annual Iowa Celebration. The Ames Heritage Association and Story County Genealogical Society served as co-hosts. With the theme "Celebrate Iowa Heritage-History-Travel" open houses were held from 11 to 4 each day. This included opportunities to meet members of the host groups as well as Iowa artists and authors displaying their work and autographing their books.

Elaine Larson (co-owner) estimated that about 100 people took advantage of the chance to become

acquainted with the host groups and their resources, the artists and authors. This event provided the Association with an opportunity to introduce the public to the group through a window display as well as the display of Ames Heritage Association publications and membership brochures. The Association expresses its appreciation to Elaine and Warren Larson for organizing the event and allowing our participation. Thanks to AHA members Don Faas, Lee Himan, Clair Keller, and Sharon Wirth for serving as hosts and to Kathy Svec for setting up the display.

Cory Family Cemetery

by Coleen Nutty

Story County, Iowa, has several pioneer cemeteries with burials of historical interest. One of these is the Cory Family Cemetery, more popularly known as the Billy Sunday Cemetery although Billy Sunday is not buried here. Sunday's mother, Mary Jane (daughter of Squire Cory) is buried at the site. The small family cemetery is located directly northwest of the former Ames Water Pollution Control Plant

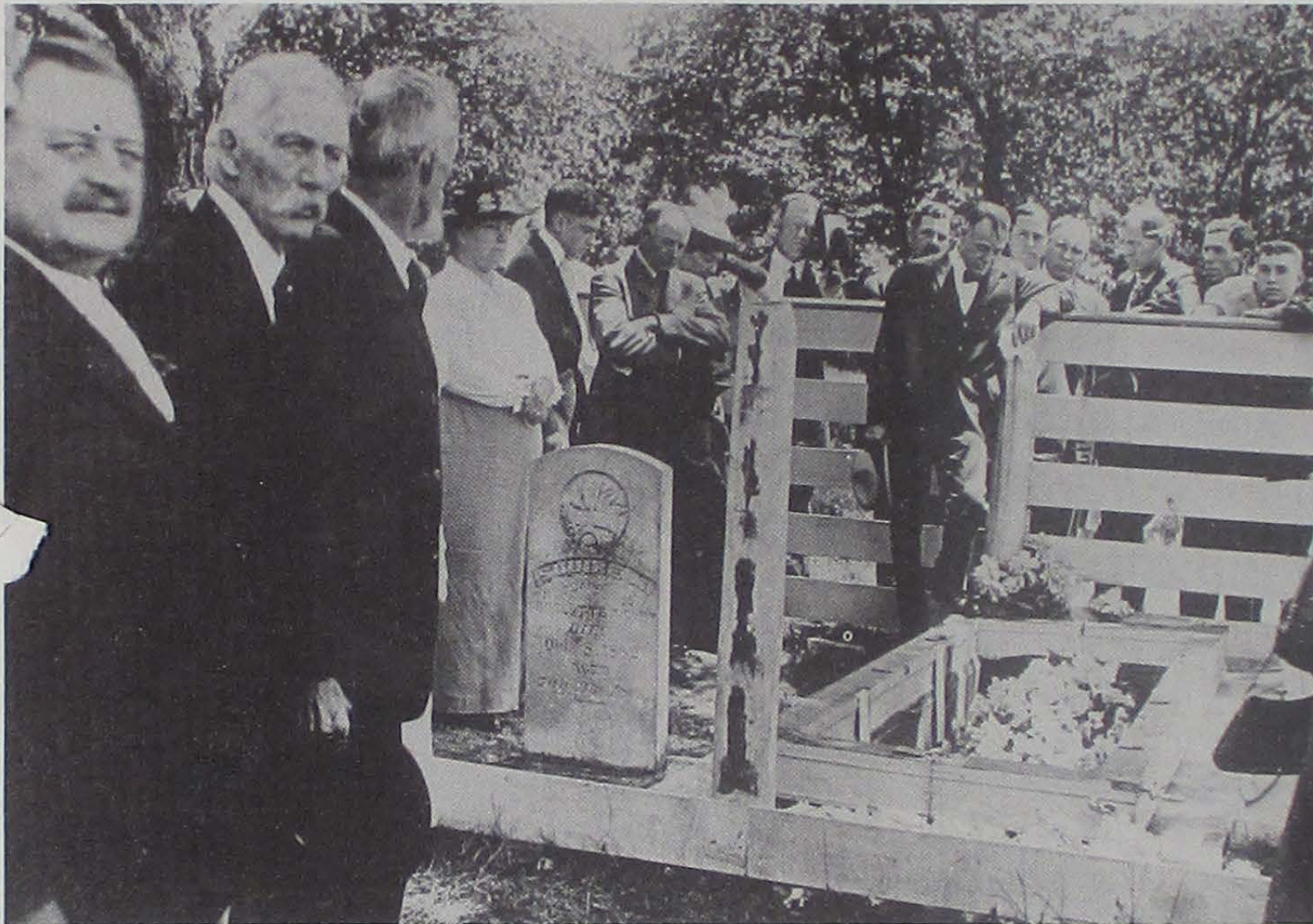
overlooking U.S. Highway 30 in Washington township. It is visible from Highway 30 looking south.

This area was originally part of the Squire Cory Homestead. Squire Cory was a prominent early settler of Story County. He was one of the founders of the Iowa Agricultural College (now Iowa State University) and a donor of land for the college.

The Cory Family Cemetery was the subject of controversy during the

Bicentennial of 1976. Billy Sunday, a famous baseball player and evangelist at the turn of the century, (see story on page 2), lived for a time in Nevada, Iowa. Years later a ball park in Nevada was named for Sunday in honor of his career as a professional baseball player. Some felt the cemetery should be moved to Nevada near the ball park. However, in the spring of 1976, the Ames American Revolution Bicentennial Commission recommended to the Ames City Council that the cemetery remain in its present location. Thus, the cemetery has been maintained in its original location.

Ironically, Billy Sunday's body is buried in Chicago. Family members interred at the site include Squire Martin and Mary A. Cory, Miranda Cory (daughter), Mary Jane Stillwell (daughter), Martha Cory Brown (daughter), Harvy Cory (son), Libby Cory (daughter-in-law), Albert Monroe Sunday, Howard E. Sunday, Mary Brown, Z. A. and S. Brown, Lillie Heiser, Lettie J. Little, Welthy Little, Catherine Watt, S. C. Watt, and two unknown. William Allen's *A History of Story County*, reported an unknown soldier's grave in the "Cory Burying Ground" (p. 439) which may refer to the two unknown burials. The cemetery is cared for by the City of Ames Municipal Cemetery Administration.



The Cory Family Cemetery is shown here at the time of Mary's Cory burial in 1919. Billy Sunday is the man leaning with the elbow on the fence, closest to the grave.

Join Us Cory Family Cemetery and Billy Sunday Birthplace

Memorial Plaque Dedication

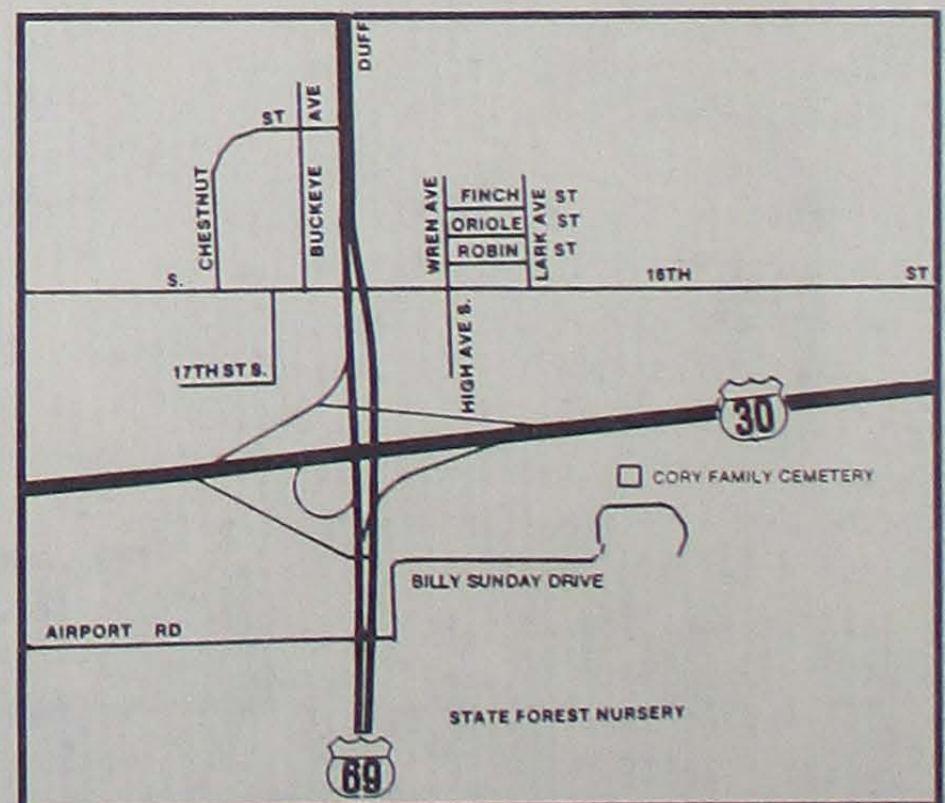
May 31, 1992 at 2:00 p.m.

Program

Welcome:
President,
Kathy Svec
Ames Heritage Association

Refreshments Served

Dedication:
Farwell T. Brown
Ames Historian





The accompanying caricature is one of a series which appeared in 1917 and 1918 Ames Evening Times highlighting influential Ames residents of the time period. Copies of these caricatures were donated to the Association by Con Wendell of 807 Duff Ave. A number of these delightful drawings will be incorporated into a special series in the Fall and Winter issues of the newsletter.

1992 Goals

The Board of Directors has recently outlined the following goals for 1992.

- Complete the next phase of restoration of the Bauge Log Home.
- Replace front door, white-wash interior and paint exterior of Hoggatt School.
- Organize and complete the dedication of the Billy Sunday Memorial Plaque.
- Create a certificate of thanks for use by the Association.
- Sponsor several special events or lectures throughout the year, including Preservation Week.
- Explore use of space for displays in City Council Chambers.
- Continue working toward Local Landmark status for 1915 City Hall.
- Continue fundraising for special projects.

Ames Heritage Association Officers

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The Ames Heritage Association meets the third Monday of every month (September through June) at 7:00 p.m. at Willson-Beardshear School, 920 Carroll, Ames.

The annual membership meeting is held the third Monday of January. Time and place are announced in advance.

The Ames Intelligencer is published three times a year-winter, spring, and fall.

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